Coordinates: 59.944°N 30.297°E

Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences

The **Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences** (Russian: Библиотека Российской академии наук (БАН)) is a large state-owned Russian library based in Saint Petersburg on Vasilievsky Island and open to employees of institutions of the Russian Academy of Sciences and scholars with higher education. It is a part of the academy and includes, besides the central collection, the library collections housed by specialized academic institutions in Saint Petersburg and other cities.

The library was founded in Saint Petersburg by a decree of Peter I in 1714 and subsequently included into the structure of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences. Since 1747 all academic institutions and since 1783 all publishers in the country have been legally obliged to provide the library with a free copy of each published item.

In 1728-1924 its collections were stored in the building of Kunstkamera, with which it had formed a single academic institution until 1803. In the 1920s the library received many items confiscated during nationalization in Soviet Russia.

In 1924-1925 the collections were transferred to the new building built for the library in 1914 and occupied by a military hospital during the First World War.

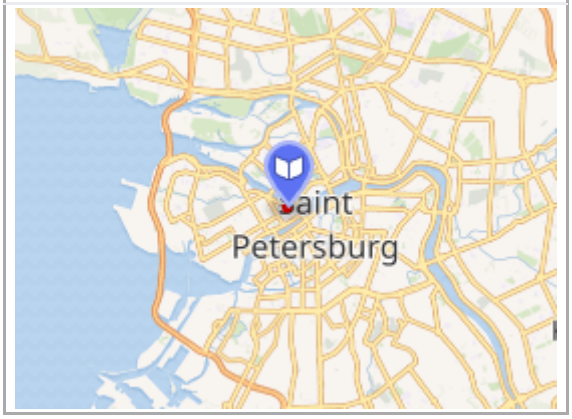
During the siege of Leningrad in 1941-1944 the collections stayed in the besieged city and the library was open.

On February 15, 1988, the library suffered the most catastrophic fire in its history which destroyed or damaged a considerable part of the collections.

Before the fire, as of October 1, 1986, the collection of the library and libraries subordinate to it consisted of 17,288,365 items.[1]

Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences

Established	1714
Location	Saint Petersburg
Collection	
Size	20.5 million (central collection)
Access and use	
Population served	employees of the Russian Academy of Sciences and scholars with higher education
Other information	
Director	Valery Leonov
Website	http://www.rasl.ru
Map	



References

1. Справочник-путеводитель по сети специальных библиотек ленинградских академических учреждений / Отв. ред. К. В. Лютова. – Ленинград: Библиотека АН СССР, 1987.

Further reading

- David H. Stam, ed. (2001). *International Dictionary of Library Histories*. Fitzroy Dearborn. ISBN 1579582443.

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